The Medicine Dance

I, of course, thought that it must 159*
indeed be a marvelous thing and I was very happy 796
about it. What I was most eager to see was myself
killed and then brought to life again in the lodge, as it [775]
was believed happened to the members of the Medicine
Dance. I also realized that a member of the Medicine
Dance, whether man or woman, was different from a [554]
person not belonging to it and I was quite anxious not
to be an ordinary person any longer but to be a medi-
cine man.

As soon as we finished building the ceremonial lodge
the ceremony began, and the first thing the people did
was to sing. Then the leader of the band that was 159*
giving the dance arose and delivered a speech: 796
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All those who are sitting here I greet. We are waiting
for all of you to have compassion upon us. Nephew,[38] I
shall now tell you the road you are to travel. He whom we
call nephew, the hare, the founder of the Medicine Dance,
obtained this life-ensuring ceremony for us. This is the
only life; no other exists. Exert yourself to follow in the
road of your ancestors and adhere to the ceremony that
represented their mode of life. I know you will hearken to
what I say. Assuredly you will listen, for thereby you will
help and benefit yourself and, at the same time, attain the
good life.

Never do anything wrong. Do not steal. Do not quarrel.
If on any occasion you meet a woman on the road, turn [577]
to the right, never to the left. No matter who the woman
is, do not take liberties with her. This is what the old
people taught us and if you perform the rites of this
ceremony you will obtain the life that we desire for you.

[38] The person to be initiated is always called nephew. [608]